

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, SG5 4HG
01462 730064 enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk



6 February 2025

Members of Stotfold Town Council:

CLlr S Buck (Chair), J Smith (Vice-Chair), M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, J Headington, D Matthews, B Saunders, and J Talbot.

You are hereby summoned to attend the **GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** meeting to be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD SG5 4HG** on **WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2025 at 7.00pm** for the purpose of transacting business detailed in the agenda.

E Payne
Town Clerk

Members of the public:

In addition to attendance in person, you are now able to observe our meetings by joining via MS Teams. Join on your computer or mobile app [Click here to join the meeting](#) Please note, our meetings are recorded for minute taking purposes, and will be deleted after Minutes are approved.

Members of the public are invited to observe the meeting and may speak in the 'public section' agenda item. As per Standing Orders, if you wish to speak, you must notify the Town Clerk of your intention prior to the start of the meeting (contact in advance enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk or 01462 730064 or you will be asked at the appropriate point in the agenda if unable to give prior indication).



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OWW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

The seven principles of public life
Selflessness | Integrity | Objectivity | Accountability | Openness | Honesty | Leadership

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and accept apologies for absence from Members of the Committee.

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Members are reminded of their obligations to declare interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The Town Clerk will report any dispensation requests received. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a Councillor's interest, the Councillor has the responsibility to declare that interest in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

- a. To receive Member's declarations of interest in items on the agenda.
- b. To consider any requests for dispensations.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

Members of the public to speak are entitled to be at this meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, extended by the Local Government Act 1972, Section 100 unless precluded by the Council by resolution during the whole or part of the proceedings. on matters of concern, ask questions or make statements (maximum of 3 minutes per speaker), after giving notice of their wish to do so to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting. Order of speakers will be in order of notification. [Public Participation Policy](#) applies.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve the Minutes of the Governance & Resources Committee meeting held **22nd January 2025** as a true record of the meeting.

5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

To **receive** the following reports for decision:

6.1. Review of Standing Orders

To review the Council's Standing Orders as a recommendation of the Interim Internal Audit report.

6.2. Cheque Processing Fee

To consider the introduction a fee for organisations and companies paying for cheque.

6.3. Community Grant Applications

To receive the grant applications for Phase 2 of the 2024 - 2025 year.

6.4. Calendar of Meetings 2025-26

To receive the proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2025-26 and subject to any amendment, resolve to recommend its adoption by Full Council in May 2025.

6.5. Q3 Income and Expenditure Report

To receive this committee's income and expenditure report for Q3 and note any variances

6.6. Insurance Renewal

To consider a schedule for the renewal of the Town Council's insurance policy so quotes can be sought.

6.7. Pension Discretions Policy

To review the Town Council's Pension Discretions Policy and recommend its adoption to Full Council.

6.8. Birthday Leave

To consider the introduction of a birthday leave policy.

6.9. Procurement Policy

To receive a Procurement Policy to confirm the procedures for adopting a preferred suppliers list and recommend its adoption by Full Council.

6.10. Lone Working Policy

To receive a proposed lone working policy and recommend its adoption by Full Council.

6.11. Bank Reconciliations

To note bank reconciliations have been signed by a Councillor not on the bank mandate.

6.12. WORK PROGRAMME

To receive this committee's work programme.

7. MEMBER'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 2nd April 2025.



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE PARK, VALERIAN WAY,
STOTFOLD SG5 4HG ON WEDNESDAY 22 JANUARY 2025 AT 19:15**

Present: Cllr S Buck (Chair), J Smith (Vice-Chair), M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, D Matthews, B Saunders, and J Talbot.

In Attendance: Cllr Bendell

Also present: E. Payne – Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Headington.

DECISION: It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies.

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

There were no Members of the Public present.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2024 were received.

DECISION: It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the meeting as a true record.

5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

There was no Clerk's report to note.

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

6.1. Q2 Income and Expenditure Report

Members received a report with the Q2 income and expenditure for this committee. There were no comments.

DECISION: It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6.2. Developer Contributions S106

Members received a report regarding Developer Contributions. Members considered the update to the Terms of Reference for this committee to include responsibility for the management of this function. Members were keen to see other areas of the town



accessing these funds e.g. The Green or Hitchin Road recreation ground. The festoons around the Green could be met from S106 funding. Members raised the lack of funding to finish off the Arlesey Road MUGA and suggested additional flood lighting at the outdoor gym at this location. Other assets could be benches and bin at Arlesey Road.

Members noted the other areas where funding had already been suggested by the Town Council.

DECISION: It was **RESOLVED:**

- a) That the Terms of Reference for this committee are updated to include the management and allocation of S106 funding.
- b) The committed S106 funding allocations as agreed by CBC are noted.
- c) The proposed allocations for S106 funding as proposed by the Town Council are noted.
- d) That future S106 funding could be allocated to:
 - i. the provision of benches and bins at Arlesey Road
 - ii. Flooding lighting at the outdoor gym at Arlesey Road
 - iii. Festoon lighting at the Green

6.3. Banking Arrangements

Members received a report on the banking arrangements of the Town Council. It noted that there are currently no balances in a number of Barclays Bank accounts. Members were advised that currently, when the precept is received (in two sums in April and September), it sits in the Unity Trust account, earning 2.5% gross interest. Members were advised that this should be invested in a different account, with a higher level of interest to maximise the income from interest.

It also noted the amount of interest being earned by the CCLA Deposit Fund which was greater than the other suggested investment funds. However, due to the risk to investments and the use of public funds, Members felt that the recommendation to seek professional advice was prudent.

DECISION: It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) Note the current banking arrangements
- b) Close 4 Barclays Bank Account listed in the report with zero balances
- c) Seek professional advice on investments and report to a future meeting.
- d) Investigate the CCLA Building Fund and report to a future meeting.

6.4. Health and Safety Audit

Members received an update on the latest health and safety audit, which was completed by the health and safety consultant in October 2024. The progress from the previous audit was noted and the new areas for improvement including the management of asbestos were considered.

DECISION: It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) Note the health and safety audit



b) Note the progress to date

6.5. Councillor and Staff Training 2024-25

Members received a report outlining Councillor and staff training undertaken to date. Members noted the training undertaken to date and the suggestion that all councillors are given access to finance, cyber security, assets and code of conduct training which is outlined in the Training and Development Policy. It was also noted that new Councillors are able to attend the new Councillor training when it's offered by the county association.

DECISION: It was RESOLVED:

- a) To note the report
- b) To encourage all councillors to attend training when they felt it would support their role.

6.6. Sexual Harassment Policy and Risk Assessment

Members received a report with a policy and risk assessment for sexual harassment which is now a legal requirement.

DECISION: It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the Sexual Harassment Policy and Risk Assessment is adopted.

6.7. Freedom of Information

Members received a suite of policies to support the Freedom of Information Act and the Town Council's obligations to abide by policies for transparency and access to information by the public.

DECISION: It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that

- a) The following are adopted:
 - i. Information and Data Protection Policy
 - ii. Privacy Notice
 - iii. Publication Scheme
 - iv. Subject Access Request
 - v. Data Breach Policy
- b) The Disclosure Log is published on the website.

6.8. NJC Pay Award 2024-25

Members received a report on the settlement of the pay award for 2024-26.

DECISION: It was RESOLVED to note the report.

6.9. Bank Reconciliations

Members were advised that Cllr Cooper had signed the bank reconciliations for October and November.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

Members received the work programme for this committee.



DECISION: it was RESOLVED to note the report.

8. MEMBER’S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

There were no items.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Extra Governance & Resources Committee 12 February 2025

Wednesday 2 April 2025

10. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

10.1. HR Investigation

Members received a confidential item with quotations for an HR investigation. Members sought clarification on where the report would be received and as it had been agreed by the Extra Full Council meeting on 18 December 2024, it would be reported to Full Council. Members were also keen that the interviews were held in person and noted that this would incur mileage costs.

DECISION: It was RESOLVED to commission Contractor A, Local Government Resource Centre to undertake the HR investigation at a cost of £500 per day plus Employers NI, expenses and VAT.

10.2. Staff Recruitment

Members received a confidential report on the recruitment of staff.

DECISION: It was RESOLVED to:

- a) Recruit the position of Public Realm Manager as outlined in the report.
- b) Recruit the position of Open Spaces Officer as outlined in the report.
- c) Approve the new staff structure
- d) Approve the timescale for recruitment
- e) Appoint an interview panel with delegated powers to appoint the Public Realm Manager comprising of The Mayor, the Town Clerk and Cllr Hyde, or in their absence, Cllr Smith.

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2025

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: STANDING ORDERS

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Interim Internal Auditor's report recommended that the Town Council's Standing Orders are reviewed in line with the financial regulations.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to consider the reviewed standing orders, and subject to amendment, recommend their adoption to Full Council.

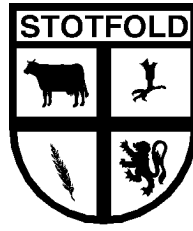
3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Members are asked to consider the sections that have been ~~crossed-out~~ as they are not in the model standing orders and have been superseded by other sections.

3.2 The areas marked in **yellow** are bespoke to the Town Council standing orders and Members are asked to confirm if they wish to include these in the standing orders.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Annual review of standing orders reduces risk of not being compliant.
Legals	LGA 1972, S12
Resources/Stakeholders	Officers
Contracts/Financials	Effects financials and contractual arrangements
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

MARCH 2025

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1. RULES OF DEBATE *AT MEETINGS*

- a. Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.
- b. A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c. A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the Chair of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d. If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e. An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f. If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g. An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the Chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the Chair.
- h. A councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i. If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- j. Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- k. One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chair of the meeting considers this expedient, but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l. A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m. The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n. Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o. Unless permitted by the Chair of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion, except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;

- iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p. During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they is concerned by.
- q. A point of order shall be decided by the chair of the meeting and their decision shall be final.
- ~~r. During the debate on the motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.~~
- q. A point of order shall be decided by the Chair of the meeting and their decision shall be final.
- ~~s. With the consent of the seconder and the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.~~
- r. When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
- i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s. Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chair of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.
- t. Excluding motions moved understanding order 1(q), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Chair of the meeting. Members shall address the Chair.

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- a. No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

- b. If person(s) disregards the request of the Chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the Chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c. If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the Chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

Full Council meetings (Council)
Committee meetings (Committee)

(Council and Committee)

- a. **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**

(Council and Committee)

- b. **The minimum three clear days' notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**

(Council and Committee)

- c. **The minimum three clear days public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice**

(Council & Committee)

- d. **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of the meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion: 'Resolved that the press and public are temporarily excluded whilst matters pertaining to staff/commercial issues are discussed and that they are instructed to withdraw from the meeting'.**

- e. Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. ~~Councillors may question that evidence, but no debate is permitted.~~

- f. ~~Public participation will be allowed at the beginning of individual agenda items on the basis set out in standing order 3(e) after advising the Clerk prior to the meeting, of their intention to speak. In accordance with standing orders 3(h) and 3(i), speakers will be permitted to speak for no more than three minutes, with no more than 3 public speakers on each agenda item. No further comments may be made by the public during discussion and voting.~~

- f. The period designated for public participation at a meeting in order with standing order **3(e)** shall not exceed 15 minutes ~~unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.~~

- g. Subject to standing order 3**(g)**, a member of the public may speak only once, and shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.

~~h. No more than three speakers will be allowed to speak on any one subject and groups of speakers for or against an issue will be encouraged to appoint a spokesperson.~~

h. In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting or start a debate on the question. The Chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

i. *A person shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort) OR [A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.*

~~Notice of questions/statements need not be submitted in writing, but questions of which notice has been given are likely to receive a more detailed reply. Speakers will, however, be required to arrive ten minutes before the start of the meeting and to indicate their wish to speak to the Clerk. The order of speaking shall be in the order in which requests to speak are received.~~

~~l. Questions/comments should relate to matters over which the Council has powers or duties, or which affect the town and should be relevant to the responsibilities of the Council/committee at which asked.~~

~~m. A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting and shall briefly outline content of their participation.~~

n. A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the Chair of the meeting.

o. Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

(Council & Committee)

p. **Subject to standing order 3(q), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**

(Council & Committee)

q. **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**

(Council & Committee)

r. **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**

(Council)

s. **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one).**

(Council)

t. **The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one) if present,**

shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.

(Council & Committee)

- u. **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**

(Council & Committee)

- v. **The Chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 6(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

(Council)

- w. **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

- x. **A member shall stand when speaking at full Council meetings unless permitted by the Chair to sit on account of infirmity.**

- i. **if two or more members rise, the Chair shall call upon one of them to speak and the others shall resume their seats**

- ii. **whenever the Chair rises during a debate all other members shall be seated and silenced**

Members are not required to stand at committee, sub-committee or advisory committee meetings.

- y. The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

- i. the time and place of a meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - vi. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vii. the resolutions made.

- z. **Information and updates may be given on previous minutes by way of an agenda item 'matters arising for information purposes only'. No decision may be taken on these updates. Similarly, information on general matters relating to the committee or Council may be given under 'items for information purposes only'. No decision may be taken on these items.**

(Council, Committee & s-Committee)

- aa. **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct**

in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on their right to participation and vote on that matter.

- bb. No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

See standing order 4d(vii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

- cc. If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. Any outstanding business on the agenda shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- dd. Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2 hours, unless agreed by resolution and a finish time determined. Any business not completed after this time shall be deferred to another meeting.**

ee. All mobile phones and other similar devices must be switched to silent or turned off.

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a. Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b. The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c. Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d. The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:**
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference, ~~detailing delegated responsibilities;~~**
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;**
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;**
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;**
 - v. *may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer () days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;***
 - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the Chair of the standing committee;**
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own Chair at the first meeting of the committee.**
 - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be one half of its**

- members, with the exception of the planning committee where four members shall constitute a quorum;
- ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
 - x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
 - xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
 - xii. may dissolve a committee or sub-committee

e. The Chair and vice-Chair of Council ex-officio shall be members of every committee.

f. The Chair and vice-Chair of the committee shall be members of every sub-committee appointed by it, unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.

g. A non-member of a committee may attend any meeting of a committee or sub-committee and at the discretion of the Chair may speak but not vote.

5. ADVISORY COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS

a. The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors, whose names shall be recorded.

b. Advisory committees and any sub-committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

c. The Proper Officer shall inform the members of each advisory committee of the terms of reference of the committee, and of the Council's standing orders, which they are required to follow.

d. An advisory committee shall make recommendations and give notice thereof to the Council.

6. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

a. In an election year the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.

b. In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.

c. If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm. The Stotfold Town Council annual meeting will commence at 7.00pm.

d. In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.

e. The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council.

f. The Chair of the Council, unless they has resigned or becomes qualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.

- g. **The Vice-Chair of the Council, if there is one, unless they resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h. **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i. **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j. Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
 - i. **in an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council of their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - iii. receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
 - iv. consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
 - v. review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
 - vi. review of the terms of reference for committees;
 - vii. appointment of members to existing committees;
 - viii. appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
 - ix. review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - x. review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses;
 - xi. review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - xii. in an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
 - xiii. review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
 - xiv. confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
 - xv. review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
 - xvi. review of the Council's complaints procedure;
 - xvii. review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (see also standing orders 14, 24 and 25);
 - xviii. review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
 - xix. review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
 - xx. review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence;
 - xxi. determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council and committees up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

7. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a. **The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b. **If the Chair of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c. The Chair of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or sub-committee) at any time.
- d. If the Chair of a committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee, any 2members of the committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee.

8. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

- a. A parish meeting may be convened by the Chair of the Town Council, any two parish councillors for the parish or any 6 local government electors of the parish.
- b. Not less than 7 clear days public notice is to be given of the meeting, the notice specifying the time, place, and business to be transacted. If however, the business proposed relates to establishment or dissolution of a parish council or the grouping of the parish under a common parish council, 14 clear days' notice is required. In all cases, the notice must be signed by the person convening the meeting.
- c. Proceedings shall not begin before 6pm.
- d. The Chair of the Council shall preside if they are present.
- e. If the Chair is absent, the Vice-Chair shall preside.
- f. If the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent, the meeting shall appoint a Chair before it proceeds to any other business.
- g. The Clerk shall record the proceedings of Town Meetings.
- h. If the Clerk is absent, the person presiding at the meeting may record the proceedings or may appoint another to do so.
- i. As soon as the Chair has been filled and provision made for recording the proceedings the minutes of the previous meeting shall be read, considered and if correct signed by the person presiding at the meeting.
- j. To receive a crime report from a representative of Bedfordshire Constabulary for the period since the last Town Meeting.
- k. To receive the accounts of the parochial charities together with comments of the Trustees.
- l. To receive a statement of the Council's accounts for the year ended the previous 31st March, and to receive the Council's observations on its finances for the current year.

- m. To receive the Chair's report on the Council's activities over the previous year.
- n. To receive an address from invited speakers.
- o. To receive an address from a Unitary Authority ward member on matters pertaining to Stotfold.
- p. To consider motions from members of the public.

9. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- a. A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 5 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 11, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or sub-committee.
- b. When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 9(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

10. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

- a. Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons have received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chair of the meeting.
- b. All co-options will be in conjunction with the Council's adopted Co-Option Policy.

11. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

- a. A motion shall relate to the responsibilities for which it is tabled and, in any event, shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b. No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c. The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 11(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d. If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 11(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 4 clear days before the meeting.
- e. If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.

- f. The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g. Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h. Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.
- i. If the subject matter of a motion comes within the province of a committee of the Council, it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such committee or to such other committee as the Council may determine for report; provided that the Chair, if he considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.

12. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

- a. The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft meetings of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a vote;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to approve the absences of councillors;
 - vii. to change the order of business on an agenda;
 - viii. to proceed to the next order of business on the agenda;
 - ix. to require a written report;
 - x. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
 - xi. to appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies;
 - xii. to note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee;
 - xiii. to consider a report made by a committee or a sub-committee
 - xiv. to consider a report made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant;
 - xv. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - xvi. to silence or exclude from the meeting a councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xvii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
 - xviii. to exclude the press or public for all or part of a meeting;
 - xix. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xx. to authorise payment of monies up to £5,000 where the expenditure was considered urgent and executive action was taken by the Clerk;
 - xxi. to authorise legal deeds to be signed by two councillors and witnessed by the Proper Officer;
 - xxii. to give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders;
 - xxiii. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
 - xxiv. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - xxv. to close the meeting.

13. QUESTIONS

- a. A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided 4 clear days' notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.

- b. Questions not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions.
- c. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.
- d. A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

14. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 24.

- a. **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b. **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c. **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d. **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors, and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

15. DRAFT MINUTES

Full Council meetings (council)
Committee meetings (committee)

- a. If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b. There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 12(a)(i).
- c. The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d. If the Chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

"The Chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but their view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."

- e. **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f. Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 15(d) and standing order 24(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes, or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

16. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 3(y).

- a. All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b. **All councillors shall undertake training in the code of conduct and appropriate councillor induction training on their role within 6 months of the delivery of their acceptance of office where possible.**
- c. Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- d. Unless they has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest and if so required by the Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- e. **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- f. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council or committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- g. A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- h. Subject to standing orders 16(e) and (g), a dispensation request shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting, or if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- i. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 16(f) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the**

- meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
- ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
- iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

17. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a. Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 14, report this to the Council.
- b. Where the notification in standing order 17(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of the Council of this fact, and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 17(e).
- c. Where a notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer) the Proper Officer shall ensure that the employee in question does not deal with any aspect of the complaint.
- d. The Council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- e. **Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council consider shall what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

18. PROPER OFFICER

- a. The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b. The Proper Officer shall:
 - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
 - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full Council and standing order 3(c) for the meeting of clear days for a meeting of a committee.

- ii. subject to standing order 11, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 4 days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer;
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. manage the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed; (*see also standing order 27*)
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. should an application require consideration and a response to the local planning authority before the next ordinary meeting of the planning committee, refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair of the planning committee (or vice-Chair of the planning committee in their absence) for consideration and executive action to be taken in conjunction with the Clerk to return comments, or if felt necessary due to the size and nature of such an application, to schedule an additional meeting of the planning committee;
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme;
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect;
- xviii. action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders;
- xix. in the event of urgent action being required between regular meetings, the Clerk or Proper Officer to take decisions and that wherever possible these decisions to be taken in consultation with the Chair of the Council and/or the Chair of the relevant committee, provided that all matters dealt with or decided, and all action taken under this order shall be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, committee or sub-committee concerned. Urgent action to be defined as:
 - a) action that will not admit of delay;
 - b) on health and safety grounds, where not to take action would put the staff or members of the public at risk and leave the Council open to prosecution for negligence;
 - c) to protect the property owned by the Council. To authorise immediate repairs in order to secure Council property, or where to delay a repair would cause greater damage and therefore greater expense to occur;
 - d) to take action to stop or prevent the Council from acting illegally, or taking such action as to prevent bringing the Council into disrepute.

19. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

- a. The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

20. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a. "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c. The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30th June, 30th September and 31st December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d. As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31st March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e. The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31st March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30th June.

21. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and

- v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee or sub-committee.
- d. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in standing order 18(f) is subject to the "light touch" arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which includes a requirement to advertise the contract of the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means is used to advertise the opportunity.**
- e. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services, or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer or to a specified email address.
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- f. Neither the Council, nor a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility is bound to accept the lowest value tender, quote or estimate.
- g. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

22. CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNCILLORS

- a. **Canvassing councillors or members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.**

- b. A councillor or member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; but nevertheless, any such person may give written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- c. If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to their knowledge related to any member of, or the holder of, any office under the Council, they and the person to whom they are related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Proper Officer. A candidate who fails to do so shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed may be dismissed without notice. The Proper Officer shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure. Where relationship to a member is disclosed, standing orders 22(b) and 16 (re interests) shall apply. The Proper Officer shall make known the purport of this standing order to every candidate.
- d. Standing orders 22(a), 22(b) and 22(c) above shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

23. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a. Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Chair of the Governance & Resources Committee or, if they are not available, the vice-Chair of the Governance & Resources Committee of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Governance & Resources Committee.
- b. The Chair of the Governance & Resources Committee or in their absence, the vice-Chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of Town Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Governance & Resources Committee.
- c. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff shall contact the Chair of the Governance & Resources Committee or in their absence, the vice-Chair of the Governance & Resources Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Governance & Resources Committee.
- d. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Town Clerk relates to the Chair or vice-Chair of the Governance & Resources Committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the Governance & Resources Committee, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Governance & Resources Committee.
- e. Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance, or disciplinary matters.
- f. In accordance with standing order 14(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 23(b).

24. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 25.

- a. **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b. **If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000, the Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

25. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

See also standing order 14.

- a. The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b. **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.**
- c. **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d. **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e. **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f. **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

26. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

- a. Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.
- b. **In accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press or other media, councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.**

27. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

See also standing orders 18(b)(xii) and (xvii).

- a. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b. **Subject to standing order 27(a), any two councillors may sign on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

28. COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS

- a. An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to ward councillor(s) of the District, County or Unitary Council representing the area of the Council.
- a — ~~Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the District and County Council OR Unitary Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.~~
- b. Ward members for Stotfold shall be requested to report to the Council on any matters discussed at the District, County or Unitary Council that are relevant to Stotfold. They should be prepared to answer any questions of fact concerning such business put to them by councillors at the end of their report, although such answers may be deferred to the next meeting if such information is not immediately available. These questions will be minuted.
- c. Guidelines to be followed:
 - i. the ward members may wish to collaborate over who reports and on what with a view to eradicating duplication and unnecessary attendance.
 - ii. reports should be brief, informative and objective. Unless there are a large number of items where a significant amount of detail on an important issue is to be reported, reports should be no longer than 10 minutes, and in normal circumstances, less.
 - iii. matters only of relevance to Stotfold should be included in the report which may encompass peripheral matters, general District, County or Unitary authority matters. Party political comments will not be allowed.
 - iv. questions of fact should be answered immediately where possible. Where this is not possible, as in the need to gather information, the answer should be made at the next Council meeting.
 - v. town councillors should only ask questions of fact concerning District, County or Unitary authority business. Party political comments will not be allowed.
 - vi. the Chair of the meeting is expected to intervene where items ii., iii., and v. are contravened.

29. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect;
or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

30. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

- a. All town Council representatives on outside bodies shall report back to the Council subsequent to a meeting of such body. The Proper Officer to be informed by the representative not later than the Thursday prior to a meeting of such a report so that it can be included on the agenda for the Council meeting.

31. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

- a. All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b. A motion to add or to vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory or legal requirements, shall be proposed and seconded and a recommendation made by the Governance & Resources Committee on amendments and shall be put to the next Council meeting.
- c. The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d. The decision of the Chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2025

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: CHEQUE PROCESSING FEE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report outlines the rationale, proposed fee structure, challenges, and implementation plan for levying a cheque processing fee.
- 1.2 Currently, the Town Council accepts various payment methods, including cheques, bank transfers, card payments and online payments. Cheque payments incur additional administrative costs, including manual processing, bank charges, and staff time including driving to Hitchin to bank the cheques. The growing preference for digital transactions raises the question of whether a cheque processing fee should be introduced to offset these costs.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are recommended to adopt a cheque processing fee of £1.50.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The rationale behind implementing a cheque processing fee:
 - Administrative Costs: Processing cheques involves staff time for handling, recording, depositing funds as well as reconciling payments.
 - Bank Charges: Unity Trust charges 0.15p per cheque. Additionally, as we deposit the cheques over the bank counter, the bank charges us 0.30p per cheque, which is billed quarterly.
 - Encouraging Digital Payments: Introducing a fee may incentivise residents and stakeholders to faster and more cost-effective digital payments.
 - Processing delays: Cheques typically take three working days to clear, delaying the availability of funds for council operations. Often cheques are received from funeral directors at the last minute, meaning the interment may have been concluded before the cheque is cleared.
 - Financial Stability: The additional revenue from the fee could contribute to covering administrative costs, ensuring council funds are used efficiently.
- 3.2 Potential challenges and considerations are:
 - Public perception that some residents, especially older individuals of those without digital access may view the fee as unfair. A clear communication strategy should be in place to explain the reasoning behind the fee.
 - The council must ensure that the introduction of a cheque processing fee complies with relevant financial regulations and does not unfairly disadvantage any group.
 - Some contractors may prefer cheque payments for their own accounting processes. The Council should assess whether this fee would significantly impact this relationship.

- The Council should ensure that accessible and user-friendly alternatives such as card payments and online facilities are promoted alongside the implementation of the fee. This could be via our extended opening hours for residents to come into the Greenacre Centre to make a card payment face to face or the implementation of a payment portal via our new website.

3.3 The Consumer Rights (Payment Surcharges) Regulations 2012 defines the amount of any surcharge should reflect the actual cost to the individual business for processing the payment.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 Over the last 6 months, we have received circa 30 cheques, primarily from funeral directors and hirers. The costs of processing cheques are outlined above.

4.2 The Finance Officer pays in cheques once a month. In addition to the processing fees, there is mileage at .45p per mile (13 miles round trip), officer time and parking fees.

4.3 Therefore in an average month, if the Council were to pay in 5 cheques the cost to the town council would be

Bank Charges 5 x 0.45 (0.15 + 0.30)	£2.25
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Mileage @ 0.45p/mile	£5.85
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£8.10 or £1.62 per cheque

Please note this does not include officer time which is an average visit time to 90 mins.

4.4 Cash can only be paid into Unity Trust via a bank. It can not be paid in via the Post Office. Cheques can be paid in via the Post Office and the same charges apply, however, wouldn't be paying mileage.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Risk of alienating residents
Legals	The Consumer Rights (Payment Surcharges) Regulations 2012
Resources/Stakeholders	Officers, stakeholders, hirers
Contracts/Financials	Bank charge budget in place
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	Could be viewed as breach of Equalities Act
Biodiversity	Reduce carbon footprint in reduced mileage.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2025

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SIAN VAN DER MERWE, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Community Grant Awards are made bi-annually in the municipal year. This report outlines those applications received for the second phase of grant applications for 2024 - 2025.
- 1.2 The Town Council's Grant Policy can be found on the website [Microsoft Word - 2024 - Grant Policy - APPROVED](#)
- 1.3 Members are asked to note that this round of applications has been submitted so that they can be met from the grant budget 2024-25.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - a) Review the applications and advise the Clerk if they wish to award a grant and the amount they wish to award.
 - b) Consider if they wish to review the Grants Policy at another meeting.

3. GRANTS RECEIVED

- 3.1 Grant applications for this application term have been made by:

- **M J Ryalls Building Supplies Ltd - £1,500**

M J Ryalls are applying for £1,500 towards the cost of a defibrillator, pads, battery and external cabinet to install on the outside of their building. This defibrillator will be available for use 24/7 by those with emergent need and will be registered with the Emergency Services.

This is the first time M J Ryalls has applied for grant funding.

- **Pix Gymnastics Club - £1,500**

Pix Gymnastics Club is relocating to Arlesey at the end of February 2025 and will no longer have access to two large foam roll mats that provide soft support for gymnasts in their classes. They were able to use two that belonged to Pixbrook Academy whilst they have been resident there. Pix Gymnastics Club previously only offered part-time classes on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays – however, with a dedicated venue they are able to offer additional classes to everyone on their extensive waiting list. They are therefore planning to host classes 7 days a week.

Pix Gymnastics Club has been awarded the following grants over the last three years:

2023/24 - £600 for Training Qualification fees for Coaches

- **Respite at Home Volunteers - £1,500**

This application has been made to the Town Council as the charity has 3 months of reserve funding left. They are asking for funding towards running costs for the charity as they are completely reliant on fundraising and donations from the public. The eligibility criteria for grant applications currently stipulates funding is to be granted towards specific project costs.

If Councillors are minded to approve this application, consideration should be given as to whether the Town Council's eligibility criteria should be amended to include grant awards for running costs.

- **St. Mary's C of E Academy - £1,500**

This application is for part of the cost of new Chromebooks to support the computing curriculum in school. The current equipment they have is dated and the computing curriculum is a vital part of children's education in a modern world.

St. Mary's C of E Academy was awarded the following grants in the last three years:

2023/24 £1,575.72 for a sensory and nurture room outfit

- **Stotfold Bowls Club - £600**

This application is for part of the cost of installing CCTV at the Green, Clubhouse and buildings storage and car park at the Bowls Club following instances of antisocial behaviour and damage to equipment and the premises.

Stotfold Bowls Club was awarded the following grants in the last three years:

2022/23 £1500 purchase of scarifier (April)
2022/23 £1000 equipment to maintain turf (September)
2023/24 £500 lighting improvements to club house (April)
2024/25 £1,040 steel multi-locking security door (April)
2024/25 £1,500 towards specialised lawn green mower (October)

- **Stotfold Runner's Club - £600**

This Runner's Club has been re-formed to promote health and fitness within Stotfold's community. They wish to gain affiliation with England Athletics in order to gain coaching qualifications to extend their provision of providing training to new members and education on safe running and developing a safer and more effective running environment around Stotfold.

Stotfold Runner's Club has not applied for a grant from the Town Council before.

- **The Barn - £198 (£165 + VAT)**

The Barn hosts a defibrillator that is available on a 24/7 basis by those in emergent need. The defibrillator they have is registered with Community HeartBeat Trust's portal to monitor the expiry dates of the pads and equipment inside the defibrillator. The Barn are applying for this funding to sign up to Community HeartBeat Trust's Annual Support Agreement, which includes maintenance of the defibrillator, replacement of parts due to expiry or use, providing software upgrades and a loan of a defibrillator in the event it is not functioning.

The Barn applied for funding in 2022 – 2023 for initial printing costs for a regular newsletter but this was not awarded.

3.2 Supporting documentation can be found online in the Councillor's SharePoint file.

4. FEEDBACK ON THE GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

4.1 A number of the applications above are for running costs (revenue) and not capital expenditure (The Barn, Stotfold Runners Club, Respite at Home Volunteers).

4.2 Feedback was obtained from four potential applicants that they are unable to apply for funding as, although their business is to provide services to the community, their business model has very limited or non-existent requirement for capital expenditure. Additionally, this Town Council has granted awards for training (Pix Gymnastics' coach qualification fees) and staffing costs (MagPas Air Ambulance – Funding for Doctor and Paramedic) in the 2023 – 2024 year.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Grant awards for 2024 – 2025 to date are:

Grant Term	Organisation	Purpose of Grant	Amount Awarded
May 2024	Just Out	Funding towards cost of equipment for youth engagement	£1,000
May 2024	The Rooms	External defibrillator	£1,500
October 24	The Need Project	Food bank supplies	£1,500
October 24	Stotfold Bowls Club	Specialised mower for lawn cutting at the Bowls Club	£1,500
October 24	1 st Stotfold Scout Group	Towards the cost of removing outbuildings from the rear of the Scout Hut	£1,500
October 24	Friends of Roecroft Lower School (FORL)	Silent Disco Headphones	£1,500
Total:			£8,500

5. FINANCIAL

5.1 The annual budget for Community Grants for the 2024/2025 year was set at £15,000.

5.2 The remaining balance for Community Grants awards for the 2024/2025 budget is £6,500.

5.3 Total value of grant applications received in this round as at February 2025: £7,398.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Formal checks on eligibility criteria – Grants Applications Policy
Legals	Localism Act 2011, General Power of Competence
Resources/Stakeholders	Community Groups, Officers
Contracts/Financials	Grants budget agreed annually
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES
DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2025
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024-25

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This committee is asked to consider the Calendar of Meetings for 2025-26. Setting a calendar enables Councillors and Staff to manage their attendance at evening meetings and allows for forward work planning.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the calendar of meetings for 2025-26 as attached and if in agreement, recommend its adoption to Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Committee's Terms of Reference have been used as the basis for the calendar, following the recommended number of meetings for each committee.
- 3.2 It is one of the requirements of the Annual Town Council meetings, set out in Standing Orders, that the meeting: *determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council and committees up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.*
- 3.3 The proposed calendar of meetings allows Officers sufficient time to manage projects in between meetings and report back within a reasonable timescale. It also allows additional meetings to be called.
- 3.3 Members are asked to be mindful of staff workload and that holding too frequent meetings, prohibits staff from taking annual leave as they are either compiling agendas or writing reports/undertaking actions from meetings.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	The normal transparency regulations apply to all meetings which will be summoned legally with minutes showing all decisions clearly.
Legals	LGA 1972, S 12
Resources	Councillors, Officers
Financial	N/A
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETINGS CALENDAR - 2025 - 2026

	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	
Wed														
Mon					1			1						Mon
Tue			1		2			2						Tue
Wed			2		4	Town Council	1	Governance & Resources		3	Town Council		1	Governance & Resources
Thu	1		3		5		2		4		1	NEW YEAR'S DAY	2	
Fri	2		4		6		3		5		2		3	GOOD FRIDAY
Sat	3		5	2	7		4		6		3		4	
Sun	4	1	6	3	8		5		7		4		5	
Mon	5	BANK HOLIDAY	7	4	9		6		8		5		6	EASTER MONDAY
Tue	6		8	5	10		7		9		6		7	
Wed	7	Annual Town Council Meeting	4	Governance & Resources	9	Public Realm	6		11	Public Realm	8	Town Council	5	Town Council
Thu	8		10		12		9		11		8		10	
Fri	9		11		13		10		12		9		11	
Sat	10		12		14		11		13		10		11	
Sun	11		13		15		12		14		11		12	
Mon	12		14		16		13		15		12		13	
Tue	13		15		17		14		16		13		14	
Wed	14	Public Realm	11	Public Realm	16	Community Engagement	13		18	Community Engagement	15	Public Realm	12	Public Realm
Thu	15		17		19		16		20		15		17	
Fri	16		18		20		17		21		16		18	
Sat	17		19		21		18		22		17		19	
Sun	18		20		22		19		23		18		20	
Mon	19		21		23		20		24		19		21	
Tue	20		22		24		21		25		20		22	
Wed	21	Community Engagement	18		23	Building Management	20		25	Building Management	22		19	Community Engagement
Thu	22		19		24		21		26	CHRISTMAS DAY	23		20	
Fri	23		20		25		22		27	BOXING DAY	24		21	
Sat	24		21		26		23		28		25		22	
Sun	25		22		27		24		29		26		23	
Mon	26	BANK HOLIDAY	23		28		25	BANK HOLIDAY	30		27		24	
Tue	27		24		29		26		31		28		25	
Wed	28	Building Management	25	Town Council	30	Governance & Resources	27		29	Governance & Resources (Budget)	26	Building Management	31	
Thu	29		26		31		28		30		27		28	
Fri	30		27				29		31		28		29	
Sat	31		28				30				29		30	
Sun			29				31				30		31	
Mon			30								31			
Tues														
	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 06/02/2025

Month No: 10

Committee Report Q3

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>Governance & Resources</u>								
61 <u>Governance & Resources</u>								
6003 Income - Miscellaneous	0	4,269	50	(4,219)			8537.4%	
6004 Income - Interest Received	0	55,210	25,000	(30,210)			220.8%	
6008 Income - Mayor Event	0	52	300	248			17.3%	
6009 Stotfest 50	0	6,118	0	(6,118)			0.0%	
Governance & Resources :- Income	0	65,649	25,350	(40,299)			259.0%	0
601 Staff Salaries	0	269,839	344,691	74,852		74,852	78.3%	
602 Employers NI	0	23,452	24,428	976		976	96.0%	
603 Ers Pension Contrib	0	31,691	51,063	19,372		19,372	62.1%	
604 Staff Training	90	5,707	5,000	(707)		(707)	114.1%	
605 Clerk's Expenses	0	284	500	216		216	56.9%	
607 Photocopier Costs	648	2,442	750	(1,692)		(1,692)	325.7%	
608 Telephone/Fax/ISDN	346	4,279	4,000	(279)		(279)	107.0%	
609 Postage	81	489	600	111		111	81.6%	
610 Stationery	475	3,374	2,750	(624)		(624)	122.7%	
611 Insurances	61	10,792	12,000	1,208		1,208	89.9%	
612 Audit Fees	0	2,640	3,000	360		360	88.0%	
613 Legal Fees	7,546	8,402	5,000	(3,402)		(3,402)	168.0%	
614 Advertising	0	4,729	6,000	1,271		1,271	78.8%	
615 IT Services	1,550	24,935	15,000	(9,935)		(9,935)	166.2%	
618 Subscription/Licence	2,194	17,085	10,000	(7,085)		(7,085)	170.8%	
619 PWLB Loan Repayments	7,834	16,199	20,000	3,801		3,801	81.0%	
620 Civic Allowance	160	1,607	1,500	(107)		(107)	107.1%	
621 Bank Charges	0	434	600	166		166	72.4%	
627 Travel Expenses	0	297	250	(47)		(47)	119.0%	
630 Grants	0	8,485	15,000	6,515		6,515	56.6%	
631 Councillor Training/Mileage	398	1,164	1,000	(164)		(164)	116.4%	
632 Professional Support	0	2,130	2,000	(130)		(130)	106.5%	
633 Vehicle Repayments (s106)	0	0	2,410	2,410		2,410	0.0%	
634 Vehicle Insurance	444	4,361	5,000	639		639	87.2%	
635 Vehicle Fuel	52	1,913	5,000	3,087		3,087	38.3%	
636 Vehicle Maintenance	89	2,147	5,000	2,853		2,853	42.9%	
637 Christmas Event	1,733	10,733	15,000	4,267		4,267	71.6%	
638 Stotfold	(585)	43,252	50,000	6,748		6,748	86.5%	
639 Com Engagment	652	9,392	15,000	5,608		5,608	62.6%	
641 Arlesey Rd Repayment (s106)	0	0	4,000	4,000		4,000	0.0%	
Governance & Resources :- Indirect Expenditure	23,768	512,258	626,542	114,284	0	114,284	81.8%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(23,768)	(446,609)	(601,192)	(154,583)				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 06/02/2025

Month No: 10

Committee Report Q3

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>62 Precept</u>								
6005 Precept	0	913,482	913,482	0			100.0%	
Precept :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>913,482</u>	<u>913,482</u>	<u>0</u>			<u>100.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income	<u>0</u>	<u>913,482</u>	<u>913,482</u>	<u>0</u>				
<u>63 Community Engagement</u>								
643 General Events	443	443	0	(443)		(443)	0.0%	
Community Engagement :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>443</u>	<u>443</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(443)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(443)</u>		<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(443)</u>	<u>(443)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>443</u>				
Governance & Resources :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>979,131</u>	<u>938,832</u>	<u>(40,299)</u>			<u>104.3%</u>	
Expenditure	<u>24,211</u>	<u>512,700</u>	<u>626,542</u>	<u>113,842</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>113,842</u>	<u>81.8%</u>	
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(24,211)</u>	<u>466,430</u>	<u>312,290</u>	<u>(154,140)</u>				
<u>Town Strategy</u>								
<u>71 Town Strategy</u>								
701 Town Strategy	0	0	4,000	4,000		4,000	0.0%	
Town Strategy :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,000</u>		<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(4,000)</u>	<u>(4,000)</u>				
Town Strategy :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>			<u>0.0%</u>	
Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(4,000)</u>	<u>(4,000)</u>				
<u>Managed Funds</u>								
<u>85 Earmarked Reserves</u>								
8001 Xmas Lights donations	0	250	0	(250)			0.0%	
8002 Income EMR - Cemetery	0	2,000	0	(2,000)			0.0%	2,000
Earmarked Reserves :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>2,250</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(2,250)</u>				<u>2,000</u>
806 EMR -Buildings Fund	0	2,690	0	(2,690)		(2,690)	0.0%	2,690
809 EMR - PCemetery Projects/Paths	0	5,930	0	(5,930)		(5,930)	0.0%	5,930
815 EMR-Rec Ground Rolling Improve	0	2,987	0	(2,987)		(2,987)	0.0%	2,987
820 EMR-Estab Office Equipment	0	5,126	0	(5,126)		(5,126)	0.0%	4,253
824 Christmas Lights	0	60	0	(60)		(60)	0.0%	60
826 EMR Youth Work	0	4,950	0	(4,950)		(4,950)	0.0%	4,950
833 EMR- S106 Greenacre Park	0	5,967	0	(5,967)		(5,967)	0.0%	5,967

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 06/02/2025

Month No: 10

Committee Report Q3

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
839 EMR - Ground Main Contract	5,883	50,263	0	(50,263)		(50,263)	0.0%	37,697
Earmarked Reserves :- Indirect Expenditure	5,883	77,974	0	(77,974)	0	(77,974)		64,535
Net Income over Expenditure	(5,883)	(75,724)	0	75,724				
9000 plus Transfer from EMR	5,883	77,101	0	(77,101)				
9001 less Transfer to EMR	0	2,000	0	(2,000)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	0	(623)	0	623				
Managed Funds :- Income	0	2,250	0	(2,250)			0.0%	
Expenditure	5,883	77,974	0	(77,974)	0	(77,974)	0.0%	
Net Income over Expenditure	(5,883)	(75,724)	0	75,724				
plus Transfer from EMR	5,883	77,101	0	(77,101)				
less Transfer to EMR	0	2,000	0	(2,000)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	0	(623)	0	623				
Grand Totals:- Income	0	981,381	938,832	(42,549)			104.5%	
Expenditure	30,093	590,674	630,542	39,868	0	39,868	93.7%	
Net Income over Expenditure	(30,093)	390,706	308,290	(82,416)				
plus Transfer from EMR	5,883	77,101	0	(77,101)				
less Transfer to EMR	0	2,000	0	(2,000)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(24,211)	465,808	308,290	(157,518)				

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES**

DATE: **12 FEBRUARY 2025**

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: **EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK**

SUBJECT: **INSURANCE RENEWAL**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the key details of the insurance renewal for Stotfold Town Council and highlights the reasons for an anticipated increase in the upcoming policy period. The renewal considerations are based on the previous schedule which can be found in the Councillors SharePoint.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report and advise the Clerk if they wish to make any amendments to the schedule.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The premium for the forthcoming insurance renewal (expires 31 May 2025), is expected to increase due to the following factors:
- Revaluation of buildings after insurance revaluation exercise undertaken February 2025.
 - Addition of new assets including new mayoral insignia and Christmas lights
 - General market conditions with premiums rising due to inflation, increased claims and high risk.
- 3.2 The Town Clerk will seek quotations for insurance renewals based on the revalued properties, the additional assets and the appropriate level of fidelity cover based on the Town Council's anticipated reserves at the end of the financial year. A long-term agreement will be sought as part of the exercise.
- 3.3 Quotations will be taken to the next meeting of the Governance & Resources Committee on 2 April 2025.
- 3.4 It is an assertion in the Annual Governance Statement that the council has carried an assessment of the risks facing the smaller authority and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required. This includes having the appropriate cover of insurance to cover land, buildings, public and hirers liability, fidelity liability, business interruption and cyber security if applicable.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 The current budget for 2024/25 was £12,000 with an expenditure to date of £10,792.
- 4.2 The budget for 2025/26 has been set at £15,000.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Insurance is an integral part of risk management
Legals	Liability insurance
Resources/Stakeholders	Members, Officers, Hirers, Public
Contracts/Financials	Budget in place
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2025

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: PENSIONS POLICY

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In the UK it became mandatory for companies to offer a company pension, also known as automatic enrolment in 2012, when the government phased in the requirement for employers to automatically enrol employees into a pension scheme.
- 1.2 The new Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme for LGPS was introduced in 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the Pensions Policy 2025 and recommend its adoption to Full Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Town Council adopted a discretions policy to administer the LGPS pension in 2014, when it was first a requirement. When public service pension schemes changed from final salary schemes to career average schemes in 2014 and 2015, older members were protected from the changes. The policy can be found here [STC Pension Policy 2014](#)
- 3.2 In 2018, the Courts found that younger members had been discriminated against because the protections did not apply to them. The 2023 changes are called the McCloud remedy. They remove the age discrimination found in the McCloud court case.
- 3.3 The proposed Pensions Policy 2025 incorporates the original discretions policy adopted in 2014 (text in green), with other mandatory discretions which have been added in blue.
- 3.4 There are only three members of staff currently in LGPS. All other eligible staff are in NEST pension scheme.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There are financial implications depending on how the discretions policy is to be implemented.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Risk of significant financial implications has been reduced with less members in LGPS.
Legals	Pensions Act 2008
Resources/Stakeholders	Officers
Contracts/Financials	Unknown financial implications
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	Equalities Act
Biodiversity	N/A

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Employer Policy Statement

The current LGPS regulations, which came into effect from 1 April 2014, require each scheme employer within the LGPS to formulate, publish and keep under review a statement which sets out their policy on certain discretions which they have the power to exercise under the LGPS regulations.

This is the formal employer policy statement of:

Stotfold Town Council

Date of publication of this policy:

1 March 2025

Effective date of this policy:

1 April 2025

This statement will be published on the Stotfold Town Council website and will also be available from other sources such as the intranet site, staff groups, trade unions and Human Resources personnel. This policy applies to prospective members, current contributory members, deferred pensioner members and pensioner members of the LGPS, and their dependants.

LGPS Regulations

Where quoted, regulations refer to The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 or The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014.

For certain employers, reference may also be made to the following regulations:

- The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000
- The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011

This policy statement will be reviewed and may change from time to time. It does not give any form of contractual rights for LGPS/staff members. LGPS/staff members should ask the employer named above for the latest version of this document before making any decisions in respect of retirement provisions. Only the version of this policy statement which is 'current' at the time an event occurs will be applicable for the purposes of determining LGPS benefit entitlement.

This statement should be read alongside information about the benefits provided by the LGPS, available on the Bedfordshire Pension Fund website.

In formulating and reviewing this policy, the employer named above must have regard to the extent to which the exercise of its discretionary powers could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service.

Stotfold Town Council will ensure that the discretionary powers are exercised reasonably. Where a cost is incurred, the policy will only be used when there is a future benefit to the employer for incurring the extra costs that may arise or be associated with the discretion. Stotfold Town Council will ensure that, where exercised, any discretions that incur additional costs will be applied and recorded as appropriate.

Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 (LGPS)

Employer Policy Statement

Further notes are available at the end of this policy document

Section 1:

List of discretionary policies applicable from 1 April 2014 in relation to post 31 March 2014 active members (excluding councillor members) and post 31 March 2014 leavers (excluding councillor members)

Relevant regulations:

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 [SI 2013/2356] [prefix R]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 [SI 2014/525] [prefix TP]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 [SI 2008/239] [prefix A]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 (as amended) [SI 2007/1166] [prefix B]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 [SI 2008/238] [prefix T]

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended) [SI 1997/1612] [prefix L]

Discretion	Regulation	Employer policy
Written policy is recommended Determine rate of employees' contributions	R9(1) & (3)	
Written policy is compulsory Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to a shared cost APC scheme (see Note 1)	R16(2)(e) & R16 (4)(d)	The policy of Stotfold Town Council is: The Council will only exercise this discretion in exceptional circumstances. This discretion will only be exercised with the express permission of Stotfold Town Council after consideration of the costs that would apply.

Discretion	Regulation	Employer policy
<p>Written policy is recommended Whether to extend 30-day deadline for member to elect for a shared cost APC upon return from a period of absence from work with permission with no pensionable pay (otherwise than because of illness or injury, relevant child-related leave or reserve forces service leave)</p>	R16(16)	
<p>Written policy is recommended Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to shared cost AVC arrangements</p>	R17(1) & definition of SCAVC in RSch 1	
<p>Written policy is recommended In determining Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP), whether a lump sum payment made in the previous 12 months is a “regular lump sum”.</p>	R21(5)	
<p>Written policy is recommended Where in the Employer’s opinion, the pensionable pay received in relation to an employment (adjusted to reflect any lump sum payments) in the 3 months (or 12 weeks if not paid monthly) preceding the commencement of Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP), is materially lower than the level of pensionable pay the member would have normally received, decide whether to substitute a higher level of pensionable pay having had regard to the level of pensionable pay received by the member in the previous 12 months.</p>	R21(5A) & R21(5B)	

Discretion	Regulation	Employer policy
<p>Written policy is recommended Whether to extend the 12-month time limit for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a member to elect that post 31 March 2014 deferred benefits <u>should not be</u> aggregated with a new employment and/or - a member to elect that post 31 March 2014 deferred benefits <u>should not be</u> aggregated with an ongoing concurrent employment <p>(generally, whether to extend the 12-month option period for a member to elect <u>not</u> to aggregate post 31 March 2014 (or combinations of pre-April 2014 & post March 2014) deferred benefits).</p>	<p>R22(7)(b) & R22(8)(b)</p>	
<p>Written policy is recommended Whether to extend the 12-month option period for a member (who has not elected to be treated as a member who, in the same employment, was contributing to the scheme on both 31 March 2014 and 1 April 2014) to elect that pre-1 April 2014 deferred benefits should be aggregated with a new employment.</p>	<p>TP10(6)</p>	
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee aged over 55 reduces their hours or grade (flexible retirement – see Note 2)</p>	<p>R30(6) & TP11 (2)</p>	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>The Council will consider employee requests to take flexible retirement on a case-by-case basis after taking into consideration factors such as service delivery, and any costs that may apply. The Town Council will be responsible for agreeing (or otherwise) all requests to take flexible retirement</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement (see Note 3)</p>	<p>R30(8)</p>	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>The Council will only waive the actuarial reduction on flexible retirement in exceptional circumstances following approval from the Town Council.</p> <p>The Council will only waive the actuarial reduction on early retirement in exceptional circumstances and as a result of</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Employer policy
		the express permission of the Town Council after considering the costs that would apply. .
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to “switch on” the 85-year rule for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 (always excludes flexible retirement) (see Note 4)</p>	TP Sch 2 para 1(2) & 1(1)(c)	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>The Council will only agree to ‘switch on’ the rule of 85 in exceptional circumstances following approval from the Town Council after considering the costs that will apply.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to waive any actuarial reduction, on compassionate grounds or otherwise, for a member voluntarily drawing benefits before normal pension age (excludes flexible retirement) (see note 5).</p> <p>For active members voluntarily retiring on or after age 55 and before Normal Pension Age, who elect to immediately draw benefits, and for deferred members and suspended tier 3 ill health pensioners who elect to draw benefits (other than on ill health grounds) on or after age 55 and before Normal Pension Age, and who:</p> <p>a) were not members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006 (known as Group 4 members), whether to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - waive, on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits, if any, built up before 1 April 2014 and/or - waive, in whole or in part (on any grounds), any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits built up after 31 March 2014 <p>b) were members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006 and who reached age 60 before 1 April 2016 (Group 1) whether to:</p>	TP3(1), TPSch 2, para 2(1), R30(8) B30(5) & B30A(5)	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That it may be agreed to adopt these discretions based on compassionate grounds. But it will further consider the definition of compassionate grounds to include, but not be restricted to:</p> <p>Compelling domestic reasons which will affect the ability of the individual to continue with their present working arrangements.</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>Reasons of ill health which do not meet the current criteria for ill-health retirement.</p> <p>Appropriate medical evidence should be provided by the Member, at the Member’s cost in support of such cases. Any medical evidence provided should be compiled by suitably qualified occupational physician.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Employer policy
<p>- waive, on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits built up before 1 April 2016 and/or</p> <p>- waive, in whole or in part (on any grounds), any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits built up after 31 March 2016</p> <p>c) were members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006 and who will reach age 60 after 31 March 2020 (or who would reach age 60 between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2020 inclusive, but who would not meet their Retirement Age (CRA) before 1 April 2020 - in this instance CRA is the earlier of the date upon which the member would meet the 85 year rule or age 65 (Group 3)) whether to:</p> <p>- waive on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits built up before 1 April 2014 and / or</p> <p>- waive, in whole or in part (on any grounds), any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits built up after 31 March 2014</p> <p>d) were members of the LGPS before 1 October 2006 and who will reach age 60 between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2020 inclusive and who will also reach their Critical Retirement Age (CRA) (in this instance CRA is the earlier of the date upon which the member would meet the 85-year rule or age 65) before 1 April 2020 (Group 2), whether to:</p> <p>- waive, on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits built up before 1 April 2020 and/or</p>		

Discretion	Regulation	Employer policy
<p>- waive, in whole or in part (on any grounds), any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits built up after 31 March 2020.</p>		
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether, at full cost to the scheme employer, to grant extra annual pension of up to £7,352 (figure at April 2022*) to an active member or within 6 months of ceasing to be an active member by reason of redundancy or business efficiency (*figure is inflation proofed annually)(see Note 6)</p>	R31	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town is:</p> <p>The Council will only exercise this discretion in exceptional circumstances. This discretion will only be exercised with the express permission of Stotfold Town Council after consideration of the costs that would apply.</p>
<p>Written policy is recommended Extend normal time limit for acceptance of a transfer value beyond 12 months from joining the LGPS.</p>	R100(6)	
<p>Written policy is recommended Each Scheme employer must appoint a person (“the adjudicator”) to consider applications from any person whose rights or liabilities under the Scheme are affected by:</p> <p>a) Decision under regulation 72 (first instance decisions); or b) Any other act or omission by a scheme employer or administering authority</p> <p>and to make a decision on such applications.</p>	R74	<p>Responsibility for determinations under this first stage of the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) rests with “the adjudicator” as named below by the Scheme employer: [insert employer name]’s adjudicator’s details are:</p> <p>Name Job Title Address Post Code Telephone number</p>

Section 2:

Discretionary policies in relation to scheme members (excluding councillor members) who ceased active membership on or after 1 April 2008 and before 1 April 2014

Relevant regulations:

- **LGPS (Administration) Regulations 2008 [SI 2008/239] [A]**
- **LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 (as amended) [SI 2007/1166] [B]**
- **LGPS (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 [SI 2008/238] [T]**
- **LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 [SI 2014/525] [TP]**
- **LGPS Regulations 2013 [SI 2013/2356] [R]**
- **LGPS 1997 (as amended) [1997/1612] [L]**

Discretion	Regulation	Employer policy
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to “switch on” the 85-year rule for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 (see Note 4).</p>	<p>TPSch 2, para 1(2) & 1(1)(c)</p>	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>As a consequence, there may be a reduction to the benefit paid where the employees does so before the age of 60. The value of any actuarial reductions will be applied. Stotfold Town Council will not seek to fund the reductions applied.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to “switch on” the 85-year rule upon the voluntary early payment of a suspended tier 3 ill health pension (see Note 4).</p>	<p>TPSch 2, para 1(2) & 1(1)(c)</p>	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That it may agree to adopt these discretions based on compassionate grounds. But it will further consider the definition of compassionate grounds to include but not be restricted to:</p> <p>Compelling domestic reasons which will affect the ability of the individual to continue with their present working arrangements and/or Reasons of ill health, which do not meet the current criteria for ill-health retirement.</p> <p>Appropriate medical evidence should be provided by the member, at the member’s cost in support of such cases. Any medical evidence provided should be compiled by a suitably qualified occupational physician.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Employer policy
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to deferred benefits paid early (before age 65) (see Note 5).</p>	<p>B30(5), TPSch 2, para 2(1)</p>	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That it may agree to adopt these discretions based on compassionate grounds. But it will further consider the definition of compassionate grounds to include but not be restricted to:</p> <p>Compelling domestic reasons which will affect the ability of the individual to continue with their present working arrangements and/or Reasons of ill health, which do not meet the current criteria for ill-health retirement.</p> <p>Appropriate medical evidence should be provided by the member, at the member's cost in support of such cases. Any medical evidence provided should be compiled by a suitably qualified occupational physician.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to suspended tier 3 ill health pension benefits paid early (before age 65) (see Note 5).</p>	<p>B30A(5), TPSch 2, para 2(1)</p>	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That it will agree to adopt these discretions based on compassionate grounds. It will further consider the definition of compassionate grounds to include, but not be restricted to:</p> <p>Compelling domestic reasons which will affect the ability of the individual to continue with their present working arrangements and/or Reasons of ill health, which do not meet the current criteria for ill-health retirement.</p> <p>Appropriate medical evidence should be provided by the member, at the member's cost in support of such cases. Any medical evidence provided should be compiled by a suitably qualified occupational physician.</p>

Section 3

Discretionary policies in relation to:

- active Welsh councillor members, and
- councillor members who ceased active membership on or after 1 April 1998, and
- any other scheme members who ceased active membership on or after 1 April 1998 and before 1 April 2008

Relevant regulations:

LGPS Regulations 1997 [SI 1997/1612]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 [SI 2008/238] [prefix T]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 [SI 2008/239] [prefix A]

LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 [SI 2014/525] [TP]

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 [SI 2013/2356] [prefix R]

Discretion	Regulation	Employer Policy
<p>Written policy is compulsory Grant application for early payment of deferred benefits on or after age 50 and before age 55.</p>	31(2)	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That it does not wish to adopt this policy in light of the requirement for the effective use of financial resources in the current financial climate.</p> <p>It does not intend to review this discretion until the financial situation has improved sufficiently in real terms.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to “switch on” the 85-year rule for a member with deferred benefits voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 (see Note 4).</p>	TPSch 2, para 1(2) & 1(1)(f) & R60	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That it may agree to adopt these discretions based on compassionate grounds. But it will further consider the definition of compassionate grounds to include, but not be restricted to:</p> <p>Compelling domestic reasons which will affect the ability of the individual to continue with their present working arrangements and/or Reasons of ill health, which do not meet the current criteria for ill-health retirement.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Employer Policy
		<p>Appropriate medical evidence should be provided by the member, at the member's cost in support of such cases. Any medical evidence provided should be compiled by a suitably qualified occupational physician.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to deferred benefits paid early (before age 65) (see Note 5).</p>	<p>31(5) & TPSch 2, para 2(1)</p>	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That it may agree to adopt these discretions based on compassionate grounds. But it will further consider the definition of compassionate grounds to include, but not be restricted to:</p> <p>Compelling domestic reasons which will affect the ability of the individual to continue with their present working arrangements and/or Reasons of ill health, which do not meet the current criteria for ill-health retirement.</p> <p>Appropriate medical evidence should be provided by the member, at the member's cost in support of such cases. Any medical evidence provided should be compiled by a suitably qualified occupational physician.</p>

Section 4:

Discretionary policies in relation to scheme members who ceased active membership before 1 April 1998

Relevant regulations:

LGPS Regulation 1995 [SI 1995/1019]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 1997 [SI 1997/1613] [prefix TL]

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 [SI 1997/1612] (as amended) [prefix L]

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 [SI 2008/239] [prefix A]

LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 [SI 2014/525] [TP]

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 [SI 2013/2356] [prefix R]

Discretion	Regulation	Employer Policy
Grant application for early payment of deferred benefits on or after age 50 and before Normal Retirement Date on compassionate grounds.	TP3(5A)(vi), TL4, L106(1) & D11(2)(c)	

Section 5:

Discretionary policies in relation to employees of an employing authority that is defined under regulation 2 of The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

Relevant regulations:

The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended) [SI 2006/2914]

Discretion	Regulation	Employer Policy
<p>Written policy is compulsory</p> <p>Whether to base redundancy payments on an actual week's pay where this exceeds the statutory week's pay limit.</p>	5	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That it will base redundancy pay on actual pay where actual pay exceeds the statutory maximum under the Employment Rights Act 1996.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory</p> <p>Whether to award lump sum compensation of up to 104 weeks' pay in cases of redundancy, termination of employment on efficiency grounds, or cessation of a joint appointment.</p>	6	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That the authority would not have sought to normally pay compensation under this Regulation except to ensure that an employee whose employment was terminated by reason of redundancy received, under Regulation 5 of the Compensation Regulations, and this Regulation, a total of up to 30 weeks' pay calculated in accordance with the Statutory Redundancy Pay Table.</p>

Section 6:

Discretionary policies in relation to former employees of an employing authority that is a body that is a scheduled body, a designate body, or a body that is deemed to be a scheduled body under the LGPS Regulations 2013 and equivalent predecessor regulations (excluding admitted bodies).

Relevant regulations:

The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000 (as amended) [SI 2000/1410]

Discretion	Regulation	Employer Policy
<p>Written policy is compulsory How to apportion any surviving spouses or civil partner's annual compensatory added years' payment where the deceased person is survived by more than one spouse or civil partner.</p>	21(4)	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That any surviving spouse's annual compensatory added years payment deemed payable, will be divided equally amongst those eligible for payment, where the deceased person is survived by more than one spouse or civil partner.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory How it will decide to whom any children's annual compensatory added years payments are to be paid where children's pensions are not payable under the LGPS (because the employee had not joined the LGPS) and, in such a case, how the annual added years will be apportioned amongst the eligible children.</p>	25(2)	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That any annual compensatory added years payment deemed payable, to a child will be divided equally amongst those children eligible for payment. Therefore, any annual added years payments will be divided equally amongst any eligible children.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether in respect of the spouse of a person who ceased employment before 1 April 1998 and where the spouses or civil partner remarries, enters into a new civil partnership or cohabits after 1 April 1998, the normal pension suspension rules should be disapplied i.e. whether the spouse's or civil partners annual compensatory added years payments should continue to be paid.</p>	21(7)	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is:</p> <p>That the normal pension suspension rules will be disapplied.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Employer Policy
<p>Written policy is compulsory If, under the preceding decision, the authority's policy is to apply the normal suspension rules, whether the spouse's or civil partner's annual compensatory added years payment should be reinstated after the end of the remarriage, new civil partnership or cohabitation.</p>	21(5)	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is: As suspension of pensions will not be applied under Regulation 21(7) this discretion will not be relevant to the authority.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether, in respect of the spouses or civil partner of a person who ceased employment before 1 April 1998 and where the spouses or civil partner remarries or cohabits or enters into a civil partnership on or after 1 April 1998 with another person who is also entitled to a spouses or civil partners annual CAY payment, the normal rules requiring one of them to forgo payment whilst the period of marriage, civil partnership or co habitation lasts, should be disapplied i.e. whether the spouses or civil partners annual CAY payments should continue to be paid to both of them.</p>	21(7)	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is: That the normal pension suspension rules will be disapplied.</p>
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to and to what extent to reduce or suspend the member's annual compensatory added years payment during any period of re-employment in local government and thereafter?</p>	17 & 19	<p>The policy of Stotfold Town Council is: That as such payments are unlikely to have been made by the authority under the regulations, no attempt will be made to suspend such payments in the event of reemployment. This is rationale is further strengthened because it would seem to be disingenuous in light of the current flexible retirement policy to do so.</p>

Section 7:

Discretionary policies each employing authority may apply in the exercise of its discretionary powers to make any award in respect of leavers, deaths and reductions in pay that occurred post 15 January 2012

Relevant regulations:

The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011 [SI 2011/2954]

Discretion	Regulation	Employer Policy
<p>Written policy is compulsory Whether to pay an injury award and in what circumstances:</p> <p>Whether to make an injury award to those who sustain an injury or contract a disease as a result of anything they were required to do in performing the duties of their job and in consequence of which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - suffer a reduction remuneration, or - cease to be employed as a result of an incapacity which is likely to be permanent and which was caused by the injury or disease, or - die leaving a surviving spouse, civil partner, eligible cohabiting partner or dependant. 	3 - 7	
<p>Written policy is compulsory How to determine the amount of an injury award and for how long will it be paid.</p>	3 - 7	

Additional notes on discretions

Further information, including a full list of discretions and a technical guide to employer policies, is available at <http://www.lgpsregs.org/resources/guidesetc.php>

Discretion	Regulation	Note 1
<p>Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to a shared cost APC scheme.</p>	<p>R16(2)(e) & R16 (4)(d)</p>	<p>The Scheme employer may choose to fund, in whole or in part, any arrangement entered into by an active scheme member to pay additional pension contributions by way of regular contributions in accordance with Regulation 16(2)(e), or by way of a lump sum in accordance with Regulation 16(4)(d).</p> <p>The Scheme employer may enter into an APC contract with a Scheme member who is contributing to the MAIN section of the Scheme in order to purchase additional pension of not more than the additional pension limit (£7,352 from April 2022, figure is inflation-proofed annually).</p> <p>Any extra pension granted by the Scheme employer under a SCAPC arrangement would be subject to an actuarial reduction for early payment where, other than in a case of ill health retirement, that extra pension is drawn before the member's Normal Pension Age.</p> <p>The amount of additional contribution to be paid is determined by reference to actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given to the circumstances under which the Scheme employer may wish to use their discretion to fund in whole or in part an employee's Additional Pension Contributions.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Note 2
<p>Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee reduces their hours or grade (flexible retirement)</p>	<p>Regulation R30(6) & TP11 (2)</p>	<p>An active member who is aged 55 or over and who, with the agreement of their employer, reduces their working hours or grade of employment may, with the further consent of their employer, elect to receive immediate payment of all or part of the retirement pension to which they would be entitled in respect of that employment as if that member were no longer an employee in local government service on the date of the reduction in hours or grade (adjusted by the amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State – separate policy required under Regulation 30(8)).</p> <p>As part of the policy making decision the Scheme employer must consider whether, in addition to the benefits the member may have accrued prior to 1 April 2008 (which the member must draw), to permit the member to choose to draw all, part or none of the pension benefits they built up after 31 March 2008 and before 1 April 2014 and all, part of none of the pension benefits they built up after 1 April 2014.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Note 3
<p>Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement.</p>	<p>R30(8)</p>	<p>Where a Scheme employer’s policy under regulation 30(6) (flexible retirement) is to consent to the immediate release of benefits in respect of an active member who is aged 55 or over, those benefits must be adjusted by an amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State (commonly referred to as actuarial reduction or early payment reduction).</p> <p>A Scheme employer (or former employer as the case may be) may agree to waive in whole or in part and at their own cost, any actuarial reduction that may be required by the Scheme Regulations.</p> <p>Due consideration must be given to the financial implications of agreeing to waive in whole or in part any actuarial reduction. Where flexible retirement is agreed for an employee aged 55 or over but under Normal Pension Age, the cost of waiving an actuarial reduction, in whole or in part, would have to be met by, and paid to the Pension Fund by, the scheme employer.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Note 4
<p>Whether to “switch on” the 85-year rule for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 (excludes flexible retirement)</p>	<p>TP Sch 2 para 1(2) & 1(1)(c) & 1(1)(f) and R60</p>	<p>Where a scheme member leaves employment and elects to draw their benefits at or after the age of 55 and before the age of 60 those benefits will be actuarially reduced unless their Scheme employer agrees to meet the full or part cost of those reductions as a result of the member otherwise being protected under the 85-year rule as set out in previous Regulations.</p> <p>So as to avoid the member suffering the full reduction to their benefits the Scheme employer can ‘switch on’ the 85-year rule protections thereby allowing the member to receive fully or partly unreduced benefits but subject to the Scheme employer paying a strain cost to the Pension Fund.</p> <p>The employer can also exercise a discretion (see below) to waive any actuarial reductions (including where an actuarial reduction may still be applied to a member’s benefits after ‘switching back on’ the 85-year rule in full), at a cost to the employer.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Note 5
<p>Whether to waive any actuarial reduction, on compassionate grounds or otherwise, for a member voluntarily drawing benefits before normal pension age (excludes flexible retirement)</p>	<p>TP3(1), TPSch 2, para 2(1), R30(8), B30(5) & B30A(5)</p>	<p>A Scheme employer may agree to waive in whole or in part and at their own cost, any actuarial reduction that may be required by the Scheme Regulations.</p> <p>Due consideration must be given to the financial implications of agreeing to waive in whole or in part any actuarial reduction.</p> <p>There is no definition in the regulations of ‘compassionate grounds.</p>

Discretion	Regulation	Note 6
<p>Whether to grant additional annual pension to an active member or within 6 months of ceasing to be an active member by reason of redundancy or business efficiency (by up to £7,352).</p>	<p>R31</p>	<p>A Scheme employer may resolve to award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) an active member, or (b) a member who was an active member but dismissed by reason of redundancy, or business efficiency, or whose employment was terminated by mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency, <p>additional annual pension of, in total (including any additional pension purchased by the Scheme employer under Regulation 16), not more than the additional pension limit (£7,352 from 1 April 2022).</p> <p>Any additional pension awarded is payable from the same date as any pension payable under other provisions of the Scheme Regulations from the account to which the additional pension is attached.</p> <p>Any extra pension granted by the scheme employer would be subject to an actuarial reduction for early payment where, other than in a case of ill health retirement or retirement on redundancy or business efficiency grounds, that extra pension is drawn before the member's Normal Pension Age.</p> <p>In the case of a member falling within sub-paragraph (b) above, the resolution to award additional pension must be made within 6 months of the date that the member's employment ended.</p> <p>Scheme employers should take care to avoid the policy being discriminatory on age or gender grounds.</p> <p>Awards of additional pension may have implications for a member's Annual and Lifetime allowances and could result in a tax charge.</p>

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2025

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: BIRTHDAY LEAVE POLICY

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report outlines a proposal to introduce an additional paid day of leave for council staff, referred to as 'Birthday Leave'.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to approve the introduction of birthday leave from 1 April 2025.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Offering staff a dedicated day of leave on their birthday is a gesture of appreciation and an opportunity to boost morale.

3.2 Basic Green Book holiday entitlement:

- Employees are entitled to **23 days of annual leave**, rising to **28 days after five years of continuous service** (pro-rata for part-time staff).
- Additionally, employees are entitled to **eight statutory public/bank holidays** each year.
- Two additional days are awarded at the discretion of the Town Council, and these have been used during the Christmas period.

3.3 New staff have been recruited on 25 days leave, rising to 30 days after 5 years' service which was included to aid recruitment.

3.4 Members will recall that the Town Clerk took a report to a previous meeting about Christmas leave which had been awarded previously for an additional 3 Christmas day leave. The HR provider advised that this was now custom and practice and the Town Clerk negotiated with those staff who it affected to have these additional days leave as regular leave so that the office could open during the Christmas break. All staff were happy with the variation of contract which was undertaken with HR advice.

3.5 The average annual leave allowance has stayed around 22-23 days since 2019. The national trend is that employees are using their time off, with the amount of leave carried forward dropping:

2019 - 18.5 days
2020 – 17.8 days
2021 – 16 days
2022 – 13.4 days
2023 – 8.8 days
2024 – 5.3 days

This would indicate that employees value their time away from the workplace and understand how much they gain professionally and personally. The sharper decline in days carried forward following 2022 is likely an effect following on from the pandemic and people's shift to focus on their health and wellbeing.

- 3.7 The Town Council's contract of employment states that 5 days of leave can be carried forward. It does not state when this leave has to be taken.
- 3.8 The attached proposed policy has been reviewed by the HR provider. It would affect all the current members of staff, 14 in total.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 The financial implications are minimal, as this initiative will not incur additional costs. The day of leave will be absorbed within the existing staff workload. Proper scheduling will ensure that service delivery is not impacted.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A
Risk Management:	Clear policies and scheduling procedures will mitigate potential disruptions in daily operations.
Legals:	The policy will comply with employment law and be incorporated into staff contracts.
Resources/Stakeholders:	Managers will ensure adequate coverage during staff absence.
Contracts/Financials:	No significant financial impact.
Crime & Disorder:	No implications.
Equalities:	The policy will be applied equitably to all permanent staff.
Biodiversity:	No implications.

DRAFT BIRTHDAY LEAVE POLICY

1. Purpose

At Stotfold Town Council, we believe in celebrating the personal milestones of our employees. Our Birthday Leave Policy is designed to allow employees to take a day off on their birthday, ensuring they can celebrate this special occasion in a way that is meaningful to them.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all permanent, full time and part time employees of Stotfold Town Council.

3. Policy Details

3.1 Entitlement

- Employees are entitled to one additional day of paid leave per year to be taken on their birthday. There is a right from day one of employment
- Should you leave the company before the date of your birthday, you will not be entitled to Birthday leave or any payment in lieu of Birthday leave. The Council reserves the right to vary, amend or withdraw this benefit without notice.

3.2 Conditions of Use

- Birthday Leave must be taken on the employee's actual birthday. If your birthday falls on a Bank Holiday, you will be entitled to the next working day.
- If you are a part time employee and your birthday falls on a non-working day, you can take your birthday leave on the next available working day. You will be entitled to take the equivalent amount of leave as your normal working day.
- If the employee's birthday falls on a weekend:
 - The leave will be taken on the closest working day, either the preceding Friday or the following Monday.
 - If annual leave has been booked, then the birthday leave would be used instead of annual leave.
- Birthday Leave cannot be:
 - Taken on any other day.
 - Transferred, carried over, or exchanged for monetary compensation.
- Approval of leave is subject to staffing needs and will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Should you decide to leave the Council or have your employment terminated by the Council, you will not be paid in lieu if it is lost or untaken.

3.3 Notification

- Employees must notify their line manager at least 14 days in advance of their birthday to ensure operational requirements are met.
- Managers are responsible for ensuring adequate cover is arranged during the employee's absence.

3.4 Eligibility

- This entitlement applies only to permanent employees.
- Temporary or casual staff are not eligible for Birthday Leave.

4. Equality and Inclusion

This policy applies equally to all eligible employees, ensuring fair and consistent treatment in line with the council's commitment to equal opportunities.

5. Those who are absent from work

If you are absent from work during the week of your birthday due to:

- **Sickness:** Where an employee is absent due to sickness, you will be able to take the day at another time during the same holiday year, as agreed with your Line Manager. The request must be submitted via Timetastic and authorised accordingly. However, if you return to work in the next holiday year, you will lose the right to the additional day off, as this does not form part of your statutory entitlement.
- **Family Leave:** For those who are taking any of the family friendly rights listed in the Family Related Leave Policy (in the staff handbook), you are entitled to accrue this extra day and take it on your return.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2025

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: PROCUREMENT POLICY

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This procurement policy is designed to complement Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and set out a clear framework to assist Officers in the procurement process.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to review the proposed policy and recommend its adoption to Full Council.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The principles behind the procurement policy are to:

- Assist Officers in the process of obtaining goods and services at the best value for money.
- Monitor overspends on contracts and support budget management.
- Ensure fair competition amongst suppliers
- Introduce standard processes to reduce the likelihood of errors or disputes
- Set out clear terms and conditions to minimise risk related to delivery, quality and service

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 This will set along Financial Regulations and Standing Orders along with the Scheme of Delegation.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Ensures value for money and reduces poor contract performance
Legals	Local Government Act 1988 Part II, Local Government Act 1999, Local Government Act 2000, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, and the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997, Procurement Act 2023
Resources/Stakeholders	Officers, Contractors
Contracts/Financials	Assist with budget management
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

PROCUREMENT POLICY 2025

1. Introduction

- a) Procurement is a complex function guided by numerous policies and statutes. A comprehensive Procurement Policy is critical to ensuring that all stakeholders involved in procurement follow the proper procedures and rules, and that there is a clear and consistent understanding of the regulations and organisational approach in relation to procurement.
- b) The purpose of this guide is to provide an overview of the procurement of goods and services. It is intended to complement but not replace the Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- c) The Town Council is accountable to the public for the way that it spends public funds, and this Procurement Policy supports the delivery of the Town Council's strategic objectives in the efficient, effective, and economic delivery of services, ensuring that suppliers and contractors provide best value products, services, and performance. The pursuit of sustainability and continual improvement is a key goal of the Procurement Policy.
- d) The Town Council is committed to providing quality services. It will use fair and open competition and will use external as well as internal providers wherever practicable as a means of securing efficient and effective services.
- e) This Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Council's Governance & Resources periodically, or in response to changes in legislation.

2. Purpose

Stotfold Town Council's (The "Council") Procurement Policy has the following purposes:

- a) To obtain best value in the way the Council spends money, so that it may in turn offer better and more cost-effective services to the public.
- b) Best value does not always mean the cheapest. Quality products or services which cost more may sustain themselves in the longer term and therefore may be the better option where best value is concerned.
- c) To support the ability of the Council's officers to procure and manage goods, services, and suppliers effectively, including informing all Council staff of the appropriate procedures and responsibilities.
- d) To enable the Council to comply with legal obligations that govern the spending of public money such as the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- e) Wherever possible, practicable and financially viable, support the local economy by prioritising local procurement of goods and services within a five- mile radius of Stotfold.

3. Scope

Every individual involved in procurement and contract management processes within the Council falls within the scope of this policy. The Town Clerk and Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for ensuring that their staff comply with this Policy. The Responsible Financial Officer will co-ordinate all procurement practices helping to ensure compliance with this Policy as well as being responsible for providing all associated advice.

The Policy governs the method by which the Council spends money on goods and services which the Council needs to deliver its services. It does not apply to internal purchases or service provision, and only applies to external purchases from outside the Council.

4. Related Policies

Every contract made by or on behalf of the Council shall comply with:

- This Policy.
- The Council's Financial Regulations.
- All relevant statutory provisions including in particular the Local Government Act 1988 Part II, Local Government Act 1999, Local Government Act 2000, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, and the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997, Procurement Act 2023.

5. Procurement Principles

When procuring goods and services, the Council, where possible will aim to meet the following principles:

- a) The Council shall only enter into a contract with a supplier if it is satisfied as to the supplier's suitability, eligibility, financial standing and technical capacity to undertake the contract by carrying out appropriate due diligence.
- b) The Council recognises the benefits to the economy of using local businesses and will seek out local contractors and suppliers wherever possible, practicable and financially viable.
- c) All contractors and suppliers working on Council sites will be required to comply with the Council's Health & Safety policy and any rules specific to the site of operation, for example Cemetery Regulations. Provision of suitable risk assessments and safe working method statements will be a condition of all such contracts.
- d) The Council requires all contractors working on Council sites and projects to maintain adequate insurance, including but not limited to Public Liability insurance for £10 million.
- e) All procurement will be in accordance with the Council's Equality Policy and in line with our legal obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 which makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex or marital status, disability and on the grounds of age.
- f) The Council recognises the importance of sustainability and will consider the environmental, social, and economic impacts of its purchasing decisions. The Council will encourage the purchase of locally sourced products and, where

possible, ensure that products and materials originate from sustainable sources and accredited sustainable companies. In order to:

- Minimise waste and maximise efficiency
- Minimise travel
- Minimise energy consumption
- Promote greater use of new sustainable technologies
- Keep material consumption to a minimum.

6. Register of Approved Contractors

The Council needs to have access to pre-approved contractors to supply routine services or who can be called on to provide emergency services, including but not limited to:

Electricians, grave diggers, glaziers, grounds maintenance contractors, general builders, ground workers, locksmiths, memorial masons, plant hirers, play equipment repairers, plumbing and heating engineers, tree surgeons, vehicle, and machinery service engineers.

Contractors wishing to be included on the Council's register of approved contractors will be required to complete a registration form (see attached). The register of approved contractors will be reviewed periodically.

7. Thresholds and procedures for procurement

The table below sets out the actions to be followed when the Council intends to enter into a contract for minor, medium, and major spend commitments for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services. Reference is to be made to the Council's Financial Regulations for the full procedure and list of exceptions.

Expenditure Value	Action
Minor Expenditure Commitments For expenditure of £500 or less in value	Town Clerk or the duly authorised Senior Leadership Team within the Scheme of Delegation.
Medium Spend Commitments Expenditure exceeding £500 but less than £3,000	Quotations from at least three contractors first shall be invited.
Major Spending Commitments For expenditure exceeding £3,000	A minimum of three fixed price quotes.
Additional Requirements Public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (The Regulations), which is valued at £30,000 or more	The Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations. The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts.
Public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds, the Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive	The full requirements of the Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award.

2014/24EU which may change from time to time. (Footnote 2 Thresholds currently applicable are: a) For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£164,176) b) For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,104,394)	
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8. Tendering

Tendering is a more formal and exhaustive method of obtaining quotations. A tender submitted by a supplier is a legal offer, and when accepted by the Town Council, a formal contract exists.

Tendering must be used for all purchases where there is a possibility that the overall contract value may exceed £25,000. The invitation to tender must be advertised, including on the Government 'Contracts Finder' web portal.

The Council may choose in some instances to tender for service contracts below this value (e.g. cleaning contracts). A more in-depth procurement process may be necessary for smaller contracts due to the importance of the quality of service to be provided. However, where the Council has an established relationship with a professional service provider and is happy with the standard of service and price, it will not be necessary to tender. Also, it can be advantageous not to tie the Council to a contract with one provider, such that, in the event of poor performance, it is straightforward to take business elsewhere.

Invitations to Tender

An invitation to tender includes the following information:

- Tender Name/Number
- Name/email/phone number of lead officer
- Covering letter
- Conditions of Tender
- Conditions of Contract
- Standardised Financial Costing Summary
- Specification
- Timetable/dates
- Stamped or Freepost envelope for return of tender specifying date and time for return.

It is the responsibility of the lead Officer to produce a tender document.

Any invitation to tender must be addressed to the Town Clerk within a sealed envelope. The tender is to remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. In the future Council may wish to consider a secure methodology for the electronic submission of tenders. Alternatively it can be sent electronically to an email specifically set up for the purpose of receiving tenders and opened by the Town Clerk in the presence of a councillor.

Financial Cost Summary

The Financial Cost Summary is the pricing schedule which tenderers must complete. Its purpose is to ensure that all tenderers submit prices on a common basis and in a common format, making evaluation more straightforward – e.g. fixed price or time basis, one-off or multiples, annual cost, or full contract cost.

Tendering Period

During the period between invitation to tender and receipt of tenders, it is vital that all tenderers are treated equally e.g. an extension request, or any queries of substance raised by one tenderer must be applied to all tenderers simultaneously.

Tender Opening

A Register of Tenders Received is kept by the Town Clerk. This process will be administered and evaluated by the Town Clerk. Tenders are opened simultaneously by a Councillor in the presence of the Town Clerk, who will record the prices in the Tender Register. The result of tenders will be reported to Committee once an evaluation has been undertaken.

Tender Evaluation

Once tenders have been opened, they are evaluated to ensure best value for money and that the tender matches the specification and any other selection criteria. In many contracts, whilst all tenderers may be capable of meeting the requirement, some may be better in terms of cost, quality, availability of resources, quality of staff, proposed timescales, and environmental factors. Tenders that do not meet the specification should be rejected.

Post Tender Evaluation

Once the tenders or quotes have been evaluated, it may be possible to improve the overall value for money of bids through negotiation. Post-tender negotiation may involve more than one supplier. Potential areas of improvement may involve areas other than cost e.g. improved delivery times. When choosing which tender to award a contract to, it is important to consider the cost over the lifetime of the asset, any additional costs, and any re-sale value. If during such negotiations the requirement is vastly changed, the Council should consider re-tendering

9. Contracts

Ideally contracts should not be placed that run beyond the end of the current administration, although to obtain 'best value' a longer term may be necessary. A contract letter and official order should be sent to the successful tenderer. Letters should also be sent to the unsuccessful tenderers.

The expenditure must be within agreed budgets and the order signed according to the Scheme of Delegation. Any unsuccessful tenderer may request a debrief in respect of their tender, although the Town Council reserves the right not to declare all information relating to the award of the relevant contract.

Contract Management

Once a contract has been agreed, it is the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that, as far as practicable, the goods or services are delivered as per the specification. Procurement advice should be sought if required and the RFO should always be advised in case of unsatisfactory performance.

Variation and Extension

From time to time, variations and extensions to contracts are required. These require different types and levels of approval, depending on their nature.

- Time extensions with no extra cost - small time extensions can normally be authorised by the Town Clerk and reported to the relevant committee.
- Extra work/Extensions to contracts - if this does not exceed 5% of the contract value, a revised order can be placed (subject to normal authority levels). Anything above 5% (of the contract value) will need Committee approval and may require a further tender.

Regular Service Contracts

Regular Service Contracts provide goods and services at fixed prices on a regular basis and over a fixed period of time e.g.:

- Computer equipment/ongoing support
- Contract Cleaning
- Alarm and Fire Systems

Where a Regular Service Contract is in place, other suppliers must not be used for the purchase of these goods or services unless authorised, in order to avoid a potential breach of contract.

10. Employing Consultants

Officers need to determine that in-house resources are not sufficient and that the extra expense involved in hiring a firm of consultants is clearly justified before employing a consultant. A detailed project brief should be prepared before selecting a consultant. If necessary, it can be refined later to take account of the consultants' ideas and input. The brief becomes the consultants' Terms of Reference. A project brief can avoid any misunderstanding between consultants and council.

Identification of Need:

- Identify the objectives of the project and what the outcome is intended to achieve or change.
- Consider the availability of potential in-house resources before seeking to engage external consultants.
- Assess and document the benefits of employing consultants
- Identify costs of Council's contribution, i.e. staff time.
- Agree a budget.
- Obtain approval from the relevant Committee

Preparation of Project Brief

The project brief should include:

- Background to the project
- Project objectives
- Expected outcomes
- Project timetable
- Council's own contribution

- Reporting requirements
- Relevant source documents available for inspection

Employment of Consultants

A draft agreement should contain the following elements:

- Description of project
- Project schedule with key milestones
- Fees, including definition of reimbursable expenses
- How payments will be made
- Reporting arrangements
- Arbitration/termination arrangements
- Names of Council staff involved

Terms of reference agreed between the Council and consultants should be attached to the agreement. This should include clear end point and procedures for 'signing off' when the project is complete. Once the contract is signed, consultants should be given official notification to proceed in writing.

The project should be closely monitored against specification, key milestones, and costs. Regular progress reports should be made to Committee. A project evaluation should be made at the end of the contract.

11. Authorisation of Expenditure

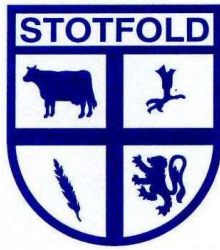
Orders for goods or services by Stotfold Town Council must be made in accordance with approved budgets and the approved spending limits set up in the Scheme of Delegation.

Purchases that are likely to exceed the maximum officer spending limit, require Committee authorisation. The Town Clerk is authorised to undertake urgent matters, including emergency repairs and maintenance of buildings, grounds, and equipment, to be reported to the appropriate Committee or Full Council as soon as possible thereafter.

The first signature of certification of an invoice prior to payment verifies that the officer is satisfied that the goods or services have been received by the Council and represent proper value for money.

Final certification of all invoices for payment will be as follows:

- Town Clerk.
- Two other bank signatories who will also authorise the payments online.



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL
PREFERRED SUPPLIERS REGISTER

Application form for contractors wishing to be included on the Council's register of approved contractors:

Business Name	
Business Address	
Contact Name	
Contact telephone number and Email address	
Type of business	
Member of professional bodies/ accreditations/qualifications if applicable	
I understand that the Council requires me to hold Public Liability Insurance of £10m or greater	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware that I am required to comply with the Council's Health and Safety Policy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware that I will be required to provide suitable risk assessments and/or method statements	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Please return this form to enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk

Stotfold Town Council
Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold SG5 4HG 01462 730064

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2025

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: LONE WORKING POLICY

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Stotfold Town Council has a duty of care to its employees who work either regularly or occasionally alone. A lone working policy helps the council meet its requirements under the Health and Safety at Work Act and Safety at Work regulations.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to recommend to Full Council that the attached policy is adopted.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The policy is designed to alert staff and managers to the risks associated with lone working; to identify the responsibilities each person has and describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It gives employees a framework to manage potentially risky situations.

3.2 At its meeting on 11 December 2024, the Public Realm Committee resolved to provide lone workers with a lone working device.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 The cost of lone working devices is being met from 27/2205 Legal & ROSPA – currently £3,500 left in budget

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Reducing risk to workers and contractors who work on their own.
Legals	Health and Safety At Work Act
Resources/Stakeholders	Officers, contractors
Contracts/Financials	Some financial outlay to protect lone workers
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

LONE WORKING POLICY 2025

1. Introduction

This Lone Working Policy outlines the measures and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of employees who work alone. Stotfold Town Council is committed to providing a safe working environment and ensuring that risks associated with lone working are effectively managed.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and volunteers who may be required to work alone at any time during their employment or engagement with the organisation.

3. Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where an employee works by themselves without close or direct supervision. This can occur:

- Outside of regular working hours.
- In remote or isolated locations.
- In situations where the employee is the only one present at the worksite.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Management

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy.
- Conduct risk assessments to identify potential hazards associated with lone working.
- Implement control measures and a Risk Management Plan to minimise identified risks.
- Ensure that employees are provided with appropriate training and resources.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the lone working policy and procedures.

4.2 Employees

- Follow the procedures and guidelines set out in this policy.
- Report any hazards or incidents related to lone working to their manager.
- Take reasonable care of their own safety and the safety of others affected by their actions.

5. Risk Assessment

Assessing the Risk:

Managers must consider the following when deciding if an activity can be conducted while alone:

5.1 Individual vulnerabilities

- Are any individuals especially at risk when working alone?
- Is the person medically fit to work alone? Some medical conditions make sufferers unsuitable for lone working. Managers who have concerns about an individual's fitness for lone working should refer them to the Town Clerk for consideration, a Safety Critical Health Assessment could be requested.

- Are inexperienced workers especially at risk while working alone?
- Individuals with impaired vision, hearing or mobility.
- Individuals whose first language is not English e.g. arrangements are in place to ensure information is communicated effectively, especially emergency arrangements.

5.2 Work patterns

Specific work patterns may begin during normal working hours and continue out of hours.

- shift work
- Event requirements
- flexible work pattern
- working at home

5.3 Location or work area

The work may be conducted in places managed by STC, another employer or an external location. If the worker is peripatetic, more than one work location or area may be visited on the same day.

- office, workshop
- storeroom, plant room, changing room, room, meeting spaces,
- riverbank, park land, public convenience, vehicle

5.4 Work activity

If the task is to be carried out by someone working alone the risk assessment must consider the hazards of being alone in addition to the hazards involved with the work itself. (See table 2)

5.5 Access arrangements

Arrangements to prevent unauthorised access to areas where staff work alone. Access to building or work area controlled by:

- Keyholder
- Key or combination lock
- Entry card or tag

6. Managing the Risk

6.1 Managers must ensure that:

- The lone worker understands the risks and precautions involved in their work i.e. has enough experience to work without direct supervision.
- The lone worker has information to deal with emergencies. (See table 1) N.B. the lone worker may not be familiar with the building in which they are working.

6.2 Managers should consider one or more of the following controls depending on the level of risk:

- a start/finish time has been agreed for out of hours lone working;
- the lone worker informs their supervisor that work has started / finished;
- periodic checks by the supervisor or person designated by the supervisor are made at agreed intervals e.g. hourly. Checks can be in person, by telephone (mobile or landline) or two-way radio. Alternatively, the lone worker can contact the supervisor or person designated by the supervisor at agreed intervals. N.B. ensure the means of communication works in the work location e.g. mobile phone reception is not universal;
- a procedure is in place to deal with failure to contact lone worker at agreed intervals;

- a record is kept of the information that has been provided to individuals who work alone. The Lone Working Risk Assessment Template is attached at Table 2.

6.1 Planning and Preparation

- Ensure lone working is avoided where possible. If not, ensure it is properly planned.
- Develop a lone working plan, including contact arrangements and emergency procedures following the Risk Assessment and Risk Management plan.
- Provide employees with mobile phones, panic alarms, or other communication devices in line with the Risk Assessment and Risk Management plan.

6.2 Training

- Training on the risks associated with lone working and the control measures in place will be provided to all staff.
- Ensure employees are competent to carry out their work alone safely.

6.3 Supervision

- Implement periodic check-ins in line with the Risk Assessment and Risk Management plan.
- Utilise monitoring systems as identified in The Risk Assessment and Risk Management plan.

6.4 Personal Safety

- Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a backup plan is sufficient. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
- Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety.
- Before working alone, assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the line manager.
- Staff must inform their line manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving details of their location, and following an agreed plan.
- If a member of staff does not report as expected, an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on then situation and then to respond as appropriate.
- Where staff work alone for extended periods and/or a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, to monitor and to counter the effect of working in isolation.

6.5 Emergency Procedures

- Table 1 details procedures for dealing with emergencies.
- All employees know how to summon help in an emergency.
- Provide first aid training and equipment where necessary.

7. Reporting and Monitoring

- An incident is defined as “an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage”. In order to maintain an appropriate record of incidents involving lone workers it is essential that all incidents be reported to the Clerk or Line Manager who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action. All staff are provided with the Clerk’s / Line Managers contact details. Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threaten or “unsafe” are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.
- Investigate incidents promptly and take corrective action where necessary.
- Review risk assessments and control measures regularly to ensure they remain effective.

8. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly or following any significant incidents or changes in legislation, to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

- 9. Compliance** This policy ensures the safety of employees working alone by outlining responsibilities, risk assessments, control measures, and procedures for emergencies. Regular reviews and compliance checks are essential for maintaining its effectiveness. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Stotfold Town Council is dedicated to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all, and adherence to this policy is mandatory for all staff and contractors working under the Council's direction.

Revision History:

Date Adopted	February 2025	
Date for Review	February 2027	



Table 1: Lone Worker Emergency Procedures

Table 1: Lone Worker Emergency Procedures Arrangements for normal working hours may be different or need to be supplemented when working out of hours.		
	Normal working hours	Additional procedures for out of hours
How to Contact the emergency services	<p>In the first instance the lone worker should call the emergency services on 999</p> <p>Ensure the lone worker has the local number for contact the enquires desk at STC 01462 730064</p> <p>In some circumstances it will not be practical or possible to use conventional methods of communication and a lone worker alarm may be appropriate. Features include: an automatic alert to a pre-arranged responder: operation is discreet: activation if worker stops moving: worker periodic response.</p>	Ensure that any alarm or telephone number used for out of hours contact is monitored
How to raise the alarm on discovering a fire	As displayed on the facility fire action notice	
Evacuation procedures	As displayed on the facility fire action notice	
Accident / incident	All accident and near miss incident should be recorded and STC Public Realm manager in formed the same day.	All accident and near miss incident should be recorded and STC Public Realm manager in formed the following day.
First aid arrangements	<p>Location of the nearest First Aid Box</p> <p>If there are firs aider who work in the vicinity.</p>	<p>Ensure the nearest first aid box is accessible and not behind a locked door.</p> <p>Are first aiders available or is additional resources needed.</p>



Table 2: Lone Worker Activity Guidance

Table 1: Lone Worker Emergency Procedures	
The following list is designed for Managers when preparing departmental arrangements	
No	Reasons why work cannot be conducted alone: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk control measures for the activity cannot be implemented if an individual working alone e.g. footing a ladder 2. When emergency procedures rely on the presence of others e.g. operating emergency stop buttons. 3. Some hazard specific must not be carried out alone (legal requirement) 4. Worker is under 18 years of age (young person)
POSSIBLE	5. Emergency procedures (see Table 1) and additional control measures.
YES	6. Emergency procedures (see Table1)

Activity		Additional control measures
Operating dangerous equipment e.g. brush cutters	2	
Work with equipment powered by mains electricity or other high energy source except 110 volt	2	
At or near exposed live conductors	2	
Work with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large volumes of hazardous liquids. Flammables, corrosives, toxic. • Asphyxiants • Explosives 	2	
Use of blowlamps, gas cutting or welding	2	
Confined spaces e.g. lofts, storages tanks, enclosed drains	3	
Young person (under 18)	4	
Lifting and moving heavy objects	1	
Working on a ladder	1	
Working in or less than 3m from open water	1	
Working above or near water	5	Controls identified after detailed risk assessment



Table 2: Lone Worker Activity Guidance

Play area inspection	5	Periodic checks arranged Start / Finish time agreed
Play inspection	5	Periodic checks arranged Start / Finish time agreed
Cleaning of convenience	5	Periodic checks arranged Start / Finish time agreed
Risk of violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public confrontation • public Events • leaving or traveling between locations 	5	Periodic checks arranged Start / Finish time agreed
Working at height	5	Periodic checks arranged Start / Finish time agreed
Isolated and remote location	5	Periodic checks arranged. Check in procedures agreed Start / Finish time agreed
Office based work	6	
General maintenance of isolated equipment	6	

GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024-25

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Description	Responsible Officer
Extra 12/02/2025	Cheque Processing Fee	To consider the introduction of a cheque processing fee	Town Clerk
	Lone Working Policy	To review a Lone Working Policy and risk assessment and recommend it's adoption by Full Council.	Town Clerk
	Vehicle Driver Policy	To review a Vehicle Driver Policy for the safe management of the Town Council's vehicles and recommend its adoption by Full Council.	Town Clerk
	Driver Handbook	To review a handbook for Council Officers driving Town Council vehicles and recommend its adoption by Full Council.	Town Clerk
	Procurement Policy	To review a Procurement Policy and recommend its adoption by Full Council.	Town Clerk
	Meetings Calendar 2025 - 2026	To consider the draft Meetings Calendar 2025 - 2026.	Town Clerk
	Pensions Policy	To review the Pensions Discretions Policy and recommend its adoption to Full Council	Town Clerk
	Q3 Income and Expenditure Report	To review this Committee's Income and Expenditure Report and to note any variances.	Town Clerk
	Insurance Renewal	To agree a specification for renewal of the Town Council's insurance	Town Clerk
	Grant Applications	To consider any grant applications received for Phase 2.	Democratic Services Manager
	Bank Reconciliations	To note the bank reconciliations.	Town Clerk
	Delegated Decisions	To receive the Clerk's list of Delegated Decisions relating to this Committee as per the Scheme of Delegation.	Town Clerk
02/04/25			
	Policy Review	Emergency Planning, Information Security Asset Inventory, Vexatious Policy	Town Clerk
	Asset Register Review	To consider the Town Council's asset register	Town Clerk
	Customer Care Policy	To consider a new Customer Care Policy,	Town Clerk
	Disability Confident Scheme	To consider the Town Council registering as a Disability Confident Employer	Town Clerk
	Local Council Award Scheme	To consider the Town Council applying for the Local Council Award Scheme	Town Clerk
	Bank Reconciliations	To note the bank reconciliations.	Town Clerk
	Community Grants Policy	To review the Community Grants Policy eligibility criteria.	Democratic Services Manager
	Equality and Diversity Policy	To review this Policy and recommend its adoption by Full Council.	Town Clerk
	Delegated Decisions	To receive the Clerk's list of Delegated Decisions relating to this Committee as per the Scheme of Delegation.	Town Clerk

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